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SKL

Boudreau, Paul E

To: Burger, David
Subject: RE: AP 6/15/06 article on Amnesty International Report on Alleged Renditions, Transfers

RELEASED IN FULL

From: Orlansky, Michael D
Sent: Thursday, June 15, 2006 9:22 AM
To: Skopje Front Office; Hubler, Stephen A
Subject: AP 6/15/06 article on Amnesty International Report on Alleged Renditions, Transfers

This article, on a topic that is also covered in the local media, makes mention of Macedonia towards the end (emphasis added).

Amnesty Urges Nations To Prevent Transfers

Thursday, June 15, 2006
Associated Press
By Jan Sliva
Associated Press Writer

Amnesty International urged European governments Wednesday to prevent their airports from being used by the U.S. for secret transfers of terror suspects to countries where they might be tortured, and called for compensation for prisoners who say they were spirited through the region illegally.

The human rights group said seven European Union countries - including Germany, Britain, Italy and others - were likely complicit in abductions of individuals by U.S. intelligence agents and have stonewalled attempts to investigate them. Most of the governments have strongly denied the accusations.

"The European Council must put a resolute stop to the attitude of 'see no evil, hear no evil,'" Amnesty said in a report published before an EU summit. It called on European leaders meeting Thursday and Friday to declare such actions unacceptable.

The United States has said it does not send anyone to countries that practice torture, but critics have raised concerns about rendition of terror suspects to other countries where they might face torture.

Amnesty's report gave details on seven alleged transfers through Europe after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and largely reached similar conclusions as Swiss senator Dick Marty, who released a report last week after investigating allegations of secret CIA flights and secret prisons in Europe.

Marty, investigating on behalf of the Council of Europe, the continent's leading human rights watchdog, concluded that 14 European nations colluded with U.S. intelligence in a "spider's web" of human rights abuses to help the CIA spirit terror suspects to illegal detention facilities.

Amnesty International urged EU countries to "ensure that all victims obtain prompt and adequate" compensation from responsible governments.

Some released prisoners have sued the CIA, alleging they were abducted or tortured in custody, while others have filed claims against governments they accuse of being complicit in their transfers. No compensation has been awarded to date.

Britain says the only rendition requests it has received from the U.S. were in 1997, when it granted two and rejected two, as it has previously made public.

The Amnesty report "doesn't really add anything new to previous reports," a British

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Foreign Office spokesman said, speaking on condition of anonymity in keeping with government policy. "There is no evidence to suggest that any of these flights have passed through the U.K. There's no evidence that any of the flights the report talks about have been involved in rendition."

Amnesty accused Britain of being instrumental in the arrest of two British suspects in the African country of Gambia in 2002. But Britain denied requesting their detention or playing any role.

U.S. Defense Department records confirm both men have been classified as enemy combatants and members of al-Qaida. They ended up in the U.S. prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Amnesty also said evidence pointed to Germany's complicity in the transfer of Syrian-born German Mohammed Haydar Zammar, who was apprehended during a trip to Morocco after being accused of helping recruit Sept. 11 suicide pilot Mohamed Atta.

The circumstances of Zammar's arrest are unclear. U.S. and German officials have said he was flown to Syria, but Amnesty says his family does not know where he is or whether he is alive. Germany has denied involvement in that or any other case.

Other European nations singled out by Amnesty for possibly helping U.S. intelligence agents included Sweden, Macedonia, Bosnia and Turkey. The group said there was "little doubt" those countries "have failed in their duty to respect and protect human rights."

Italy's government declined to comment on the Amnesty report and has denied wrongdoing. Sweden's Parliament has been investigating related accusations.

Bosnia has acknowledged handing six Algerian terror suspects over to U.S. authorities in 2002, ignoring a court ruling ordering their release. All six ended up at Guantanamo.

Macedonia has denied wrongdoing, as has Turkey.

"Turkey did not and will not play any role at any stage of this process," Foreign Ministry spokesman Namik Tan said, dismissing the claims by Amnesty International.

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